hange on the import of coal;

(c) whether due to the recent policies of the department the import of coal has increased; and

(d) what steps will be taken to improve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) As on 1.1.1996, the coal resosurces of India (down to a depth of 1200 metres) have been assessed by Geological Survey of India (GSI) at 201.95 billion tonnes.

(b) and (c) Indigenous production of coal is, by and large, adequate to meet the domestic coal demand, except for the steel plants which are main importers of low ash coking coal for the purpose of blending with indigenous coking coal for meeting the gap between the indigenous availability and the demand and also to improve the quality of overall blend to be used in steel plants

(d) Major steps taken to augment indigenous availability of coking coal, inter alia, include:—

(i) Increasing raw coking coal availability by reorganising existing mines and development of new mines.

(ii) Modification of the existing coking coal washeries to improve the capacity utilisation as well as the quality of washed coking coal.

(iii) Increasing raw coal feed to washeries by supplying low volatile 'medium coking coals of suitable quality.

(iv) Early commissioning of two new washers under construction at Madhuband (Bharat Coking Coal Limited) and Kedla (Central Coalfields Limited) for increasing washing capacity.

(v) Effective and better coordination between Coal India Limited and the steel plants is being done through regular review meetings at various levels.

Impact of Increase in price of coal on prices of consumer goods

2124. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether recently announced price increase in coal would lead to a general rise in prices of consumer goods;

(b) if so, whether any study has been conducted to evaluate this adverse impact;

(c) if so, with what results; and

(d) details of measures visualised to check such price increases in the coal so that its impact on general rise in prices of other commodities is checked?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) The recent increase in price of deregulated varieties of coal will have marginal impact on the price of consumer goods. The effect on Wholesale Price Index on account of recent increase in coal price is estimated to be about 0.28% only.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise in view of reply to (b) above.

(d) Increase in price of coal are necessitated by the increases in the various input costs as well as wage increases etc. The increase in price of the above nature is beyond the control of the coal industry. To some extent, however, the effect of the increase in input cost can be offset by increasing productivity. Coal industry are continuing to take steps to increase productivity and are focussing on better capacity utilisation of heavy earth moving machinery and increase in output per manshift.

Production of Aluminium and other metals at Bidhannagar Unit

2125. SHRI MD. SALIM:
SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the production of aluminium and other metals at Bidhannagar Unit of Asansol;

(b) what are the reasons that its fabrication unit has not been restarted after the take over; and

(c) whether it is affecting the possibilities of establishment of downstream aluminium industries in the hinterland?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) Aluminium metal and other metals are not produced by Bharat Aluminium Co. Ltd. (BALCO) at their Bidhanbag unit of Asansol.

(b) The fabrication unit at Bidhanbag is operational ever since its management was vested with BALCO after nationalisation of erstwhile Aluminium Corpn. of India.

(c) Does not arise.

Wakf Act, 1995

2126. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) how many states have introduced the Wakf Act, 1995 which has come in to force from 1st January 1996, and the names of the State;

(b) which are the States who have failed to introduce the Wakf Act and the reason for introducing the Act; and

(c) what action Government propose to take against State's who are deliberately not introducing the Wakf Act, 1995?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA): (a) and (b) According to the information received 4 States namely Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya and Maharashtra have already completed action for implementing the Wakf Act, 1995. The States of Assam, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Manipur, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal have reported that they are in the process of implementing the Act in thier respective States. For the States of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh and the Union Terriotry of Chandigarh, there has been a composite Wakf Borad. Consequent upon the enforcement of Wakf Act, 1995, the future set up of this composite Punjab Wakf Board is under consideration of the Central Government. Union Terriotry Administrations can implement the Wakf Act, 1995 after the powers of State Government under the Wakf Act, 1995 are delegated to them. Ministry of Home Affairs has issued notification on 19.8.96 delegating the powers to Lt. Governor/ Administrator of Delhi and Pondicherry. The question of delegating similar powers to the U.T. Administrations of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Dadra & Nagar Havely, Daman & Diu and Lakshadweep is under consideration of the Government. Information with regard to the implementation of the Act is awaited from State Governments of Sikkim and Tripura, while the matter is under consideration of the Government of Bihar. The State Governments of Goa & Nagaland have indicated some genuine difficulties in giving effect to the provisions of tr Wakf Act, 1995. The position has been clarified to them and they have been requested to reconsider the matter. The Government of Arunachal Pradesh has stated that the total population of the State compraise tribal people only, while the Government of Mizoram has stated that there is no Wakf property in the State.

(c) According to the information available with the Central Government, there is no State Government, which is not implementing the Wakf Act, 1995 deliberately and therefore, the question of taking any action by the Central Government against and State Government does not arise.